

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY MEXICO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5759

C O N F I D E N T I A L MEXICO 553

E. O. 11652 : GDS

TAGS : SNAR, MX

SUBJ : DEA EXPANSION

REFS : A) MEXICO 102 (NOTAL); B) MEXICO 77 32; C) MEXICO
7502; D) MEXICO 7772; E) STATE 172618

DEPT PASS DEA HAYS --X EOI FOR CUSACK

1. IN REFS B, C AND D WE REPORTED ATTORNEY GENERAL'S AGREEMENT TO THE DEA PERSONNEL EXPANSION REQUESTED IN REF EBM AT THAT TIME THE AG FORESAW NO SIGNIFICANT PROBLEMS IN OBTAINING GOM APPROVAL OF ALL THIRTY-ONE PROPOSED NEW POSITIONS, PLUS THE ESTABLISHMENT OF DEA OFFICES IN VER CRUZ, MERIDA AND ACAPULCO. HOWEVER, ALL THIS WAS FIVE MONTHS AGO AND WE ARE STILL WAITING FOR A REPLY FROM THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT TO OUR NOTE OF SEPT 18. AS DEPARTMENT AWARE, THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AT ONE POINT SUGGESTED WE WAIT FOR A MORE "OPPORTUNE" TIME, WHICH WE WERE LED TO THINK WOULD COME SOON AFTER THE TWO PRESIDENTS' OCTOBER MEETING AT THE BORDER. FROM THAT TIME UNTIL RECENTLY REPEATED EMBASSY AND DEA SOUNDINGS AT THE FOREIGN SECRETARIAT AND ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE HAVE PRODUCED ONLY MORE TEMPORIZING BY THE FORMER AND FURTHER ASSURANCES OF AGREEMENT BY THE LATTER.

2. MEANWHILE, AND IN LIGHT OF THESE ASSURANCES, EMBASSY AT DEA REQUEST HAS PURCHASED AN OPTION ON VERA CRUZ OFFICE
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SPACE FOR MONTHS OF DECEMBER AND JANUARY AND IS NEGOTIATING

WITH THE OWNER OF SUITABLE SPACE IN ACAPULCO. DEA HAS PURCHASED \$40,000 WORTH OF FURNITURE FOR THE PROPOSED THREE OFFICES; THIS HAS BEEN DELIVERED HERE AND ACTION IS PENDING ON A FIRM ESTIMATE FOR CONDITIONING THE NECESSARY OFFICE SPACE IN VERA CRUZ.

3. IN MID-DECEMBER AMBASSADOR JOVA MENTIONED THE PROBLEM TO UNDERSECRETARY (FONSEC) GALLASTEGUI AND ASKED WHEN THE FONSEC WOULD BE ANSWERING OUR TWO RELEVANT DIPLOMATIC NOTES. HE WAS TOLD THAT THE TIME APPEARED INOPPORTUNE IN VIEW OF THE PUBLICITY IN MEXICO CENTERING AROUND AGEE'S BOOK ON CIA. ON JANUARY 8 MINISTER BRANDIN AGAIN SPOKE TO GALLASTEGUI, WHO SAID HE HAD DISCUSSED THE MATTER WITH THE ATTORNEY GENERAL AND THEY HAD DECIDED TO POSTPONE APPROVAL. CITING REASONS HE HAD GIVEN TO AMBASSADOR JOVA, GALLASTEGUI SAID THAT THE TIME WAS NOT PROPITIOUS FOR DEA TO EXPAND ITS STAFF. THE RATIONALE BEHIND GOM RELUCTANCE APPEARS TO INVOLVE TWO CONSIDERATIONS: (A) THE SENSITIVITY AROUSED BY THE PUBLICATION OF AGEE'S BOOK; AND (B) THAT THE ESTABLISHMENT OF USG OFFICES IN CITIES WHERE THERE ARE NO U.S. CONSULATES (I.E., IN VERA CRUZ AND ACAPULCO) MIGHT POSE PROBLEMS FOR THE GOM IN THAT IT IS WITHOUT PRECEDENT IN NORMAL MEXICAN DIPLOMATIC PRACTICE. (IN ANY EVENT, IT WOULD BE IMPROPER TO ESTABLISH SUCH OFFICES WITHOUT PRIOR GOM APPROVAL, AS REQUIRED BY ARTICLE 12 OF VIENNA CONVENTION.)

4. ALTHOUGH THE FORMAL USG REQUEST SUBMITTED BY DIPLOMATIC NOTE TO THE FONSEC CONCERNS 31 NEW NEW POSITIONS, DEA HAS EXPLAINED TO THE AG'S OFFICE THAT FOR BUDGETARY REASONS IT CAN FILL ONLY SIX OF THOSE IN FY-75, AND THAT THEREFORE WE ARE ONLY REALLY REQUESTING SIX NEW PEOPLE FOR THE TIME BEING. EMBASSY WILL KEEP DEPT ADVISED WHEN AND IF WE RECEIVE WORD FROM THE FONSEC. MEANWHILE, WE BELIEVE DEPT AND DEA SHOULD BE BROUGHT UP TO DATE ON THIS UNWONTEDLY TANGLED SKEIN.
JOVA

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